

DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL

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Oakland Police, ABC Cite Clerks For Selling Alcohol To Minors

Oakland- Eight Oakland businesses were cited for selling alcohol to a minor during three separate decoy operations conducted by the Oakland Police Department and the state's Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC). Underage decoys attempted to purchase alcoholic beverages from 37 liquor stores around Oakland as part of the operations. Eight of the businesses sold alcohol to the minors.

The actions were the result of three compliance check operations on February 16, 18 and 23, in which a minor under the direct supervision of the investigators, attempted to purchase alcohol from retail licensees. ABC conducts the compliance checks as part of a statewide effort to stop minors from obtaining alcohol. People under the age of 21 have a higher rate of drunken driving fatalities than the general adult population.

The February 16, 18 and 23 operations were the eighth, ninth and tenth conducted jointly by Oakland Police and the ABC. Minor decoy operations that are designed to check on the compliance of businesses that sell alcohol, will be conducted around Oakland during the next 18 months.

Those who sell to a minor face a minimum fine of \$250, and/or 24 to 32 hours of community service for a first violation. In addition, ABC will take administrative action against the business's liquor license. That may include a fine, a suspension of the liquor license, or the permanent revocation of the license.

In 1994, the California Supreme Court ruled unanimously that use of underage decoys is a valid tool of law enforcement to ensure that liquor licensees are complying with the law.

Funding for this program was provided by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety, through the Business, Transportation and Housing Agency.

ABC is a department of the Business, Transportation and Housing Agency, which is under the direction of Secretary Sunne Wright McPeak, a member of the Governor's Cabinet.

Anyone who knows of businesses in Oakland that are in need of liquor compliance checks may contact the Oakland Police Department's alcoholic beverage action team at (510) 777-8670.

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